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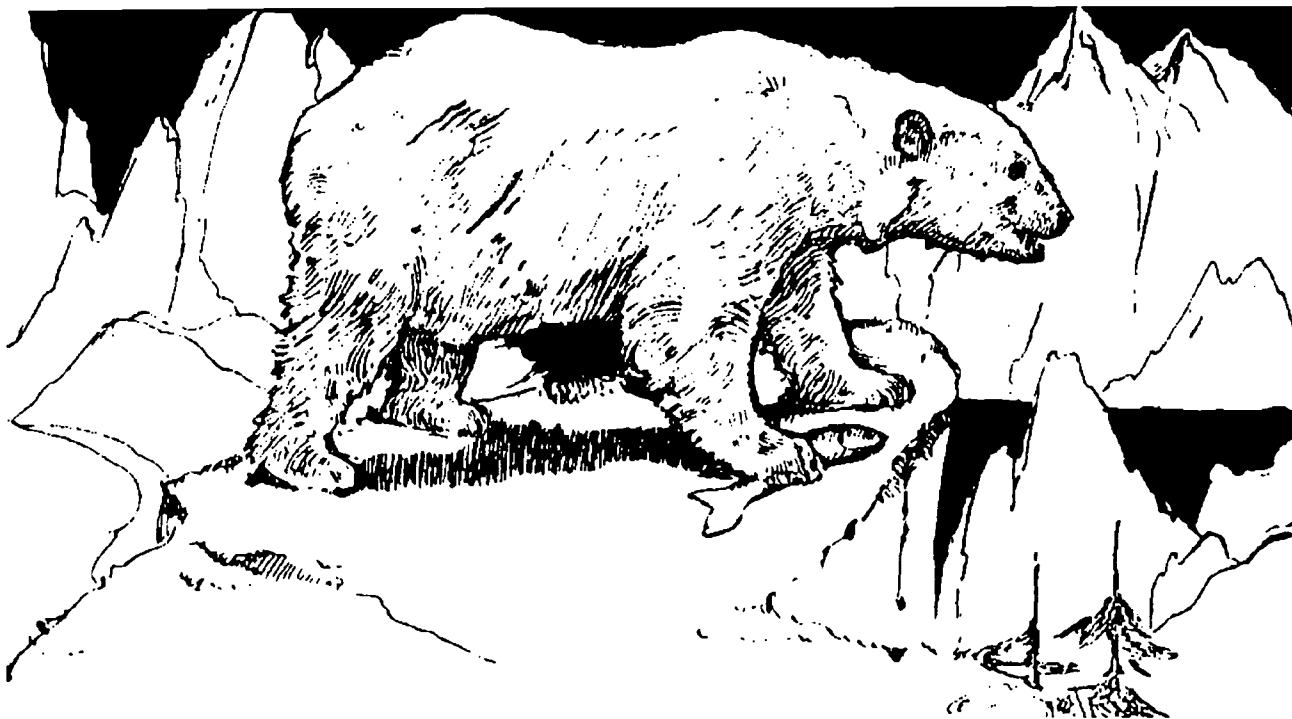
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ABSTRACT

This annual report of the Alaska State Professional Teaching Practices Commission (PTPC) cites activities and services of the PTPC as authorized by Alaska Statutes, Title 14, Chapter 20, Article 5, entitled "The Professional Teaching Practices Act." In general, the Commission handles matters of ethical and professional standards of educators and their compliance with applicable state laws and contractual obligations. The report synthesizes activities from July 1, 1996 through June 30, 1997. Section 1 explains the PTPC's purpose, organization, and activities. Section 2 describes what appropriate disciplinary action is pursuant to Section 14.20.470, Alaska Statutes. Section 3 explains professional teaching practices public hearings. Section 4 presents examples of allegations (e.g., sexual harassment of staff, sexual misconduct with students, drug-alcohol offenses, inappropriate discipline, incompetency, criminal conduct, fraudulent certificates/applications, miscellaneous issues, and contract violation). Section 5 reviews fiscal year 1997. The Commission met three times, with 57 complaints investigated and concluded. The report details the following activities and services: disciplinary actions; background searches; appeal hearings; newsletter publications; presentations; code of ethics provision; the national clearinghouse (where any disciplinary action against an educator in any state is recorded); and handbook for Alaska educators. A table presents the financial report for fiscal year 1997. Charts offer numbers of PTPC cases by calendar year and final orders and frequency of sanctions invoked. The report concludes with a list of PTPC staff and members as of October 1996. (SM)

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ANNUAL REPORT FISCAL YEAR 1997



ALASKA STATE PROFESSIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES COMMISSION (PTPC)

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INTRODUCTION

It is with pleasure that the Alaska State Professional Teaching Practices Commission (PTPC) submits to you its report for Fiscal Year 1997.

This report cites the activities and services of the PTPC as authorized by Alaska Statutes, Title 14, Chapter 20, Article 5, entitled "The Professional Teaching Practices Act."

In general, the Commission deals with matters of ethical and professional standards of educators and their compliance with applicable state laws and contractual obligations.

The PTPC is funded by program receipts from teacher certification fees, and is composed of nine educators from around the state appointed by the Governor.

This report contains a synopsis of activities of the Commission from July 1, 1996 through June 30, 1997. It was prepared on behalf of the Commission by the Executive Director, Sanna Green.

THE BEGINNING

In 1966, the education profession in the State of Alaska was granted the right and responsibility to define and to enforce ethical standards of its members. By an act of the Alaska Legislature, a nine-member commission was established and empowered to impose punitive-sanctions against the certificates of those educators who engaged in illegal, immoral, or unethical conduct. The commission, named the Professional Teaching Practices Commission, is composed of five teachers, one superintendent, one principal, one representative of the department of Education, and one representative from higher education. All are currently active in the profession. They are appointed by the governor from nominations by their respective groups.

The commission staff investigates allegations of misconduct, and with legal services provided by the Department of Law, presents the case to the commission. As a quasi-judicial body, the commission has the power to impose punitive sanctions against the certificates of those found, by the preponderance of the evidence, to be in violation. The final order of the Commission may be appealed to the superior court.

In their commitment to quality education, the members of the Professional Teaching Practices Commission hold their colleagues to the higher ethical standard that is demanded of a profession entrusted with the care and teaching of children.

PTPC IN PROFILE

What is the Professional Teaching Practices Commission?

The Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission is a quasi-judicial agency administratively assigned to the Department of Education. The Commission has jurisdiction over all members of the education profession, including administrators, and instructors in higher education. The Commission order is final in disciplinary matters regarding a teacher. Before a certificate of against an administrator may be sanctioned, the commissioner of education must concur.

Why was the Professional Teaching Practices Commission Created?

The PTPC was created to provide an avenue whereby educators have the ability to monitor the ethical conduct of its members. Additionally, the Commission provides the mechanism for disciplining educators without the cost of time-consuming court action.

WHAT IS APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINARY ACTION?

Pursuant to Section 14.20.470, Alaska Statutes, the PTPC has the power to

1. Warn members of the profession that the considered conduct is unethical, and if not corrected, a more serious sanction would be imposed. A warning is a private communication with the educator, but is a matter of public record.

2. Reprimand an educator. When a reprimand is issued, members of the education community are informed of the action, and a record is placed in the certification file.

3. Suspend the certificate of an educator. In the event of a suspension, members of the education community are informed of the action, as well as the NASDTEC clearinghouse for national distribution. A suspension may include conditions on which the certificate may be reinstated.

4. Revoke the certificate of an educator. In the event of a revocation, members of the education community are informed of the disciplinary action, as well as the NASDTEC clearinghouse for national distribution. An educator may reapply for a certificate in accordance with Alaska Statutes, at which time the Commission would review the application for another determination.

PROFESSIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES PUBLIC HEARINGS

Complaints may be filed with the Commission by anyone. If the alleged action would be a violation of the Code of Ethics of the Teaching Profession, or of the laws of the State of Alaska or the Regulations of the Department of Education, an investigation is done by the Commission staff.

If there is sufficient evidence to indicate that a violation has occurred, the PTPC attorney presents the case at a hearing before the Commission. All hearings are open to the public. If the hearing is a contested one, a hearing officer, appointed by the governor presides. The hearing is held in accordance with the Alaska Administrative Procedure Act.

EXAMPLES OF ALLEGATIONS CONSIDERED

1. *Sexual Harassment of Staff:* Sexual harassment of colleagues.

2. *Sexual Misconduct With Students:* Inappropriate comments of a sexual nature, romantic involvement with students, kissing or inappropriate touch of students, sexual contact with students.

3. *Drug-Alcohol Related Offenses:* Drinking with or providing alcoholic beverages to students, appearing at work while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, unlawful possession or sale of controlled substances.

4. *Inappropriate Discipline:* Misuse of corporal punishment, use of excessive force.

5. *Incompetency*: Due to either inefficiency or incapacity, the educator has failed to demonstrate minimal standards of competent performance.

6. *Criminal conduct, Non-Drug Related*: Unlawful conduct that may include convictions for such offenses as assault, battery, trespass, petite or grand theft, murder, forgery, insurance fraud, solicitation for prostitution, sale of child pornography.

7. *Fraudulent Certificates/Applications*: Failure to acknowledge criminal records on applications for certification, submission of fraudulent scores for certificate exams, submission of false transcripts.

8. *Miscellaneous Issues*: Racial slurs, or derogatory comments to students, promoting prejudice among students, false and malicious comments about colleagues, showing "R" rated movies or other non-approved films to students, diversion of school funds, altering student records or test scores.

9. *Contract Violation*: Leaving a position without the concurrence of the employing district.

FY '97 IN REVIEW

From July 1, 1996, through June 30, 1997:

The commission met three times in general session and once by teleconference.

FIFTY-SEVEN COMPLAINTS INVESTIGATED AND CONCLUDED

A case is concluded by any of the following actions: 1) dismissed by staff. (Staff decisions may be appealed to the Commission), 2) mediation and/or recommendations by staff to the parties involved; 3) remanded to the complainant to be pursued through local procedures; or 4) taken to the Commission for disciplinary decisions.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION TAKEN:

Case #93-42 Revoked the certificate of Todd Larson for sexual misconduct with a student.

Case #94-42 Revoked the certificate of William Clark for sexual misconduct with a student.

Case #95-33 Suspended the certificate of Ronald Arnold for five years, retroactive to January 1992, for conviction of theft.

Case #95-35 Revoked the certificate of Jonathan Griffin for theft of ritalin from student supplies.

Case #95-51 Revoked the certificate of Joey Janke for sexual misconduct with a student.

Case #96-10 Revoked the certificate of Richard von Kennen for sexual misconduct with students.

Case #97-04 Denied the certificate of William D. Lawrence for fraudulent transcript.

APPEAL HEARINGS:

Three appeal hearings were held to review staff decisions.

NEWSLETTER

A semiannual newsletter was published and distributed to all educators and other interested parties in the state.

PRESENTATIONS:

Presentations were given to graduating teacher candidates at the University of Alaska, Anchorage on professional ethics and the Professional Teaching Practices Commission.

CODE OF ETHICS:

Copies of the Code of Ethics of the teaching profession are provided by the Commission to all educators seeking certification in the state of Alaska, and in response to requests from any Alaskan.

NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE:

The National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) maintains a clearing house where disciplinary action against an educator in any state is recorded. Names and social security numbers of all educators whose certificate has been suspended or revoked are forwarded to the Alaska certification office in Juneau. Any current Alaska certificate holder or future applicant whose name is on the list is investigated by the PTPC.

HANDBOOK FOR ALASKA EDUCATORS:

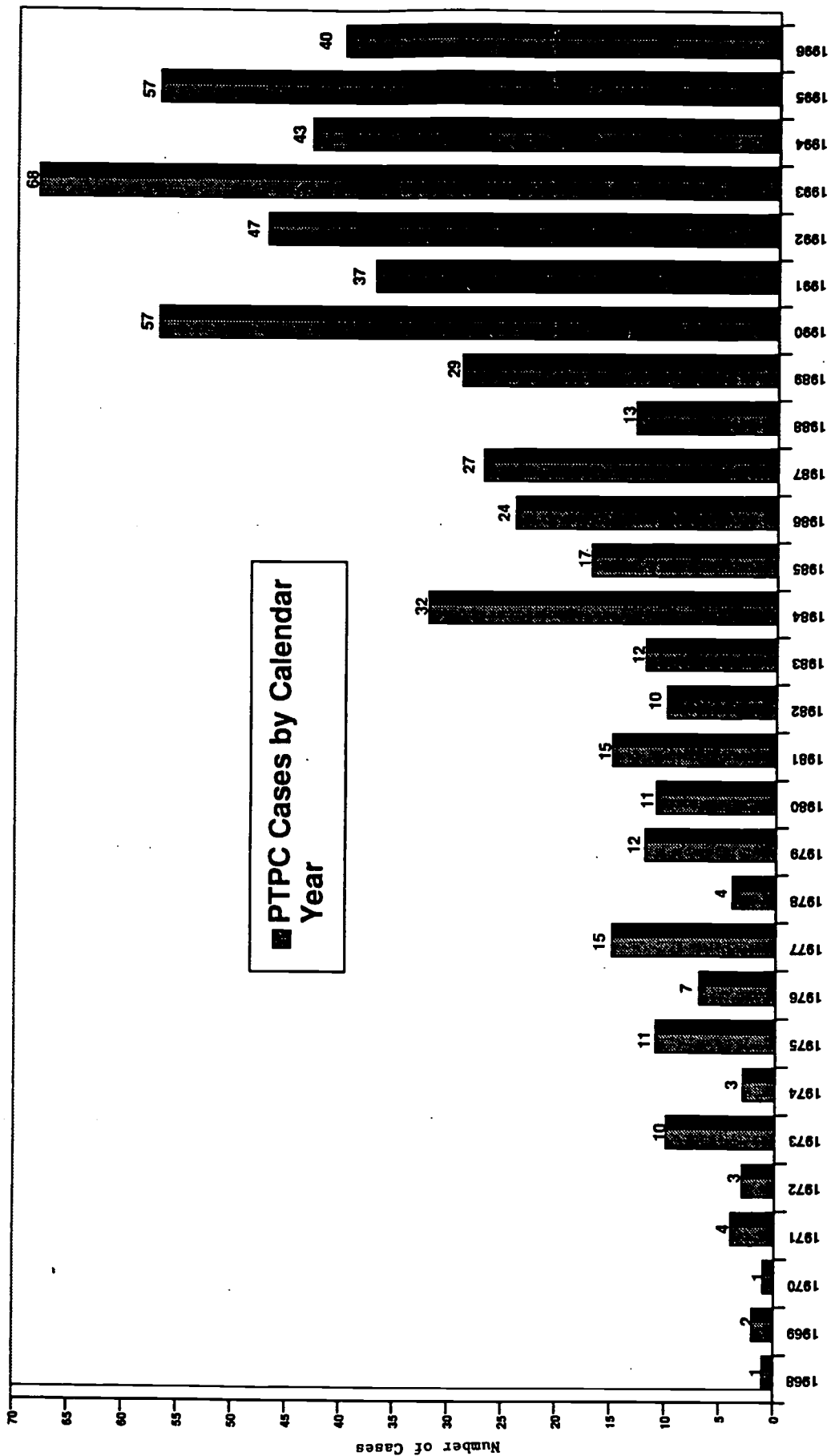
A handbook which provides information on the procedures of the Professional Teaching Practices Commission is located in the central office of each educational institution in the state. Additional copies may be obtained upon request at the PTPC office.

BACKGROUND SEARCHES:

Thirty five (35) of the cases involved investigation of certificate applicants whose previous records indicated that their fitness to teach might be in question. Educators seeking certification in Alaska who have convictions on their record or have been disciplined in another state are investigated by the PTPC and cleared by the Commission before a teaching certificate is awarded.

FY 97 FINANCIAL REPORT
Final FY 97 Balance
June 30, 1997

	Authorization	Actual Disbursements	Encumbrances	Authorization Balance
Personal Services	\$134,873.00	\$133,458.00	\$1,414.00	\$0
Travel	\$11,100.00	\$7,214.00		\$3,886.00
Contractual	\$41,000.00	\$44,581.00	\$4,423.00	(-\$8,004.00)
Supplies	\$2,000.00	\$258.00		\$1,742.00
Totals	\$188,973.00	\$185,511.00	\$5,837.00	(-\$2,376.00)



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PROFESSIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES COMMISSION

Final Orders

Frequency of Sanctions Invoked

Calendar Year	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Sexual Harassment of Staff			1				1
Sexual Misconduct With Students	4	4	5	6	1	2	6
Drug, Alcohol Offenses		1			2		1
Criminal Conduct, Non-Drug	1	1			1	1	
Fraudulent Certificates/Applications	3	2	1	1	3	4	
Contract Violations	3	1	2	1		1	
Miscellaneous	1	1		2	2	1	

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STAFF AND MEMBERSHIP ROSTER
OCTOBER 1996**

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